



Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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Buzzwords No 59 December 1993



FROM THE PRESIDENT



Because this is the last issue of *Buzzwords*, I would like to extend special thanks to the production team of Cliff Van Eaton and Nick Wallingford for their efforts in bringing us a high quality newsletter. In the first issue, President Allen McCaw noted that an objective of the 1988 industry plan was to improve the effectiveness of the NBA through the establishment of a member's newsletter. The aim was "to provide up-to-date news on marketing, overseas developments, some product information, and snippets of technical interest...in a way that was relevant, timely and readable." *Buzzwords* has certainly fulfilled its brief. So thank you, Nick and Cliff, for a job well done.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Steuart Goodman, Olive Hebron and the staff at the Pork Industry Board for the contributions they have made to the smooth running of our Association during the past 20 years. As we

mentioned in *Buzzwords* 57, the Pork Industry Board will cease to provide our administrative services on December 31 of this year.

The NBA executive has received 58 applications from individuals and organisations interested in the advertised position of NBA Executive Secretary. Executive members are currently drawing up a short list for interviews, which will be held in Wellington on December 7.

Some of the other topics of discussion at our December executive meeting include association funding under the Commodity Levies Act, the Biosecurity Act, a risk analysis for Carniolan semen importation (see elsewhere in this issue), and progress on 1080 jam bait repellents. Hive levy deferrals will also be considered, and your executive intends to offer this year a scheme similar to the one used in 1993. There will likely, however, be some alterations to deferral lengths.

The Massey Masters of Business Administration students, who have now completed their project on New Zealand honey marketing, will also make a presentation to our December executive meeting. Many of you have assisted them by completing a questionnaire or taking part in interviews, so I'm sure you will be very interested in their results.

Beekeeping is moving into top gear at this time of the year, even if weather and hive conditions seem to be a little slower down here in the far south. Seasons greetings to you all, and best wishes for trouble-free pollination, a successful honey crop, and a good production run for queens and packages.

Frances Trewby, NBA President

WE SAY GOODBYE

As we reported last month, this will be the last issue of *Buzzwords*. Your executive has decided to cease publication of the *New Zealand Beekeeper* in its current magazine style format. From next February, *Buzzwords* will be re-named the *New Zealand Beekeeper* and will be published 11 times a year.

Currently it is unclear whether my services will be retained, either as editor or supplier of copy for this new publication. It is executive's desire, if at all possible, to incorporate the job of publications editor in the new position of NBA Executive Secretary. Interviews for that position will be conducted this month.

So, amidst the uncertainty, I thought it might be worthwhile saying goodbye to you all now. As I've mentioned to many members in the last two years, I've really enjoyed being the editor (and primary writer) of this industry publication. In fact, I can safely say it's been the most satisfying part of my job here at MAF.

Communication has always been the major priority in whatever I have done with beekeepers. That's why I came to New Zealand in the first place, just over 12 years ago. And it's also why I placed so much emphasis on short courses and newsletters back in the old-style MAF. I'm therefore very thankful to your association for giving me the opportunity to help keep up beekeeper communication, albeit in a condensed form, in *Buzzwords*.

Now if I might be permitted a bit of crystal ball gazing, it is my firm belief that communication will be even more important to the New Zealand beekeeping industry in the near future. In the next two and a half years, this industry will be required by government to deal with two of the most significant issues it has had to face since the enactment of the Apiaries Act, almost a century ago.

Many readers probably think I'm exaggerating, since things still seem to be going along all right. But anyone who is complacent about beekeeping in New Zealand should realise that in June, 1996, unless pest management strategies are in place for our most significant endemic disease (American foulbrood), and for exotic diseases as well, the Apiaries Act as we know it (with all the controls and structures we have always taken for granted), will simply cease to exist.

In the case of American foulbrood, it will be up to your industry association, and the executive you elect, to ensure that the strategy which is put in place is both economical for the average beekeeper and also capable of controlling this difficult disease. To do that job well is going to take communication. Communication so that members are kept informed of developments. And communication so that members can seriously and sensibly have their say.

I believe that since the letting of a contract for AFB control two years ago, significant inroads in AFB incidence have been made in this country. But unless this work is consolidated and a strong pest management strategy is adopted by the NBA, I fear that American foulbrood may once again become a serious threat to the New Zealand beekeeping industry.

Communication (and perhaps a good deal of government lobbying) will also be essential if the industry wants to retain its ability to deal with the introduction of any exotic disease. The benefits to be gained versus the costs involved will be very hard for the beekeeping industry to grapple with. The best outcome would be for the current government fund of EDPR to carry on in its present form. But if choices have to be made, it will be essential for all beekeepers to understand 1) what sort of damage the exotic pest might do, and 2) how much the control will likely cost. Once again this will require excellent communication.

The third issue which will have to be faced (again), is the possibility of Australian honey imports. The beekeeping industry's success at halting the initial protocol in 1992 is, I believe, an outstanding example of why good communication is so important. Through *Buzzwords* we were able to keep members up-to-date with developments relating to the issue, as well as identify the reasons why the proposed protocol was flawed. And when the word went out to lobby MP's, the industry responded with a wonderful show of support. That was one of *Buzzword's* shining hours, and showed just how important this little four page newsletter could be in unifying an often fragmented industry.

Well, that's enough from me. Once again, thanks to you all, and especially to those interested readers who have taken the time to communicate with me over the years. And best of luck to the new industry publication. I wish it every success.

Cliff Van Eaton, Editor

WHO AND HOW MUCH

In this last issue, we thought we'd take the opportunity to describe how *Buzzwords* is put together, and thank all the people who have helped us so much along the way. We'll also let you in on a not-so-big secret - except for postage, *Buzzwords* doesn't actually cost that much.

Buzzword's begins on Cliff's desk at MAF in Tauranga. He reads a number of overseas beekeeping publications (including several which are now sent via satellite computer link), all of which are paid for by MAF subscriptions. As a result, the NBA doesn't have to pay for the magazines themselves. He also picks out the cartoon for the month. Most of these cartoons have come from the *American Bee*



The VSA is looking for a person with good business management skills (including accounting, bookkeeping, budgeting and cashflows) as well as the ability to formulate and implement strategic plans. It is also highly desirable that the applicant have experience in beekeeping and honey production. They are also looking for strong personal qualities such as being able to deal well with frustration and bounce back quickly from setbacks, as well as the ability to be innovative, flexible and patient. And needless to say, a strong sense of adventure is a must.

If you think you'd qualify for this position, and are interested in applying, please contact Luciana Tizzoni at VSA (phone 04-472-5759; fax 04-472-5052) as soon as possible. Interviews are scheduled for December 10-11, 1993, so there isn't much time to loose.

HONEY AWARDS PLANNED

Those of you who heard me speak at the 1993 Conference know that getting New Zealand food and beverage manufacturers to use more honey is a key strategy in our Marketing Plan.

The strategy has at least three major benefits to the industry. The first, of course, is that when such companies purchase honey, they will be absorbing some of the honey that would otherwise have gone into the "bargain bin". Bargain bin honey usually becomes a house brand, and in the present market climate it's the house brand prices that are helping to drag down the price that can be charged for branded honey.

The second benefit is that when the manufacturers start marketing their innovative products that incorporate honey, they will in turn promote the fact that the products contain honey. This not only helps to sell their product. It also benefits the overall image of honey *per se*.

An exciting extension of this benefit will come about when manufacturers don't just advertise that the product contains honey, but actually start identifying specific varieties and floral sources.

The third benefit relates more to the beekeeping industry itself. As manufacturers start to demand honey, they will also begin to demand certain standards for the production and supply of that honey. That will help increase the professionalism of our industry in the eyes of all food product users.

As part of this food ingredient strategy, the beekeeping industry needs to recognise manufacturers who have played a significant role in using honey in an innovative, exciting and successful way. And this is where you come in - if you have supplied honey to a food manufacturer who has in turn developed a product incorporating that honey, and if the honey is now being used to help promote that product, then I need to hear from you soon!

Please get in touch with me by telephone or fax and I will contact the food manufacturer direct and discuss the details. Or if you prefer, I will send a questionnaire to you so that you can interview the food manufacturer yourself.

The Marketing Committee's intention is to pre-select category winners and invite them to an inaugural Honey Awards ceremony during the 1994 Conference in Tauranga.

Because this will be the first time we have held such awards, we may not end up with winners in all categories. But that doesn't matter. What we need to do is find out just how honey is currently being used.

Ideally, we would like to have entrants in the following categories: 1) Bakery, 2) Beverage, 3) Therapeutic/Health, 4) Confectionery, and 5) Other Foods. However, we will need to restrict the initial set of awards to those products which have already been developed and are commercially available. We will also need to look at the possibility of an overall Industry Award Winner.

I appreciate that there may be some reluctance on the part of beekeepers to provide information about their manufacturer buyers because they might end up becoming a target of other members of the industry. I hope, however, that this doesn't prove to be the case. Because when you come right down to it, if someone intends pirating your opportunities, it will happen regardless of whether we have these Awards. In fact, all your competitors have to do is look at products on the supermarket shelf.

And you may find that quite the reverse might happen. By nominating a manufacturer buyer for these awards, the buyer is likely to see you in a very positive light. Your business relationship with the buyer could very well be enhanced and solidified as a result.

It is definitely the Marketing Committee's intention to give maximum possible publicity to these Honey Awards. I know from my experience in promoting other food manufacturers that the media can be very responsive to this type of event. Valuable publicity can be gained for both the honey industry and the companies who are making innovative and successful use of honey in their products.

It's a big ask! You are all busy right now with your bees, as Christmas is only a few weeks away. Still, I need to hear from you as soon as possible c/- Honey Marketing Committee, PO Box 32, Blenheim, ph (03) 578 2706, fax (03) 577 8439. To make the first Honey Awards a big success, we need to start on the project right after New Year.

The Information I Need -

- 1) Your name, your business name, telephone/fax, postal address
- 2) Name of your food manufacturer client, contact person, telephone/fax, postal address
- 3) Type of honey that you are supplying to the client
- 4) The product brand and brief description, as it is sold in the marketplace
- 5) Whether the product is domestic (NZ only), or Export (indicate which countries)



Journal, so our thanks must go to that publication and the very good humorists they employ.

Cliff also receives pertinent articles from within New Zealand which have been singled out for him by Olive Hebron, the NBA's jack-of-all trades at the Pork Board. Our thanks to Olive for picking up so much great information over the years. Many of the *Main Report* articles we have quoted (for better, and sometimes for worse!), as well much of our reporting of industry marketing successes, first came to our attention via Olive.

Occasionally, we also receive articles which have been written by members. In the past, Cliff usually had to write almost the whole of *Buzzwords*, since very little (except for branch notes) came in from readers. But recently, reports from the likes of Bill Floyd and the Marketing Committee have allowed Cliff to give up his job as ghost-writer, at least for one or two articles each issue, and concentrate on being the editor instead.

On the 22nd or 23rd of the month prior to the publication date, Cliff usually sits down at his trusty computer console and composes the *Buzzwords* text. He selects the articles or stories he believes will be of interest, and then either paraphrases, or in many cases, summarises them, so that they will fit into the short, concise newsletter form. He also edits submitted copy, generally for length and clarity of phrase, and includes all information and copy which the NBA executive has directed in their meeting minutes.

When he has finished with the text, he prints it out, proof-reads and edits it, and makes corrections. Then he generally proof-reads it once more. Finally, he faxes the text to the NBA president, whose job it is to approve the final version. No other organisation or individual (especially MAF) has any approval authority over *Buzzwords*.

Once the president's approval has been received, Cliff makes any changes required and copies the text to a floppy disk. He then visits Nick at the Bay of Plenty Polytech. Nick's job is to "page make" the text, using a very good desktop publishing programme owned by the Polytech. He saves the text from Cliff's disk, then alters and re-arranges it until it looks identical to what you see in your hands right now. Then he laser prints the pages and gives them back to Cliff to check and proof-read (yes, again!). Most readers probably don't realise that Nick has never charged the NBA for this service, saving the association at least \$150 an issue (or \$8850 since *Buzzwords* began in 1988).

Cliff now takes the laser-printed pages to Advance Print in Tauranga. Peter and Kevin, the owner-operators, put on the front page logos, attach the cartoon, and then print and fold the newsletter. Many people think that the shiny paper is more expensive. But as it turns out, the paper is the same price as the matt variety, and has a much longer life (ie, it doesn't fade).

Peter and Kevin do a great job, and often give us a very fast turn around, especially when a late-breaking story or association decision has meant that we haven't been able to keep to schedule. Peter and Kevin have also been involved in a number of other publishing projects for the

NBA, including the annual reports and the industry profile. So thanks, Peter and Kevin, especially for your cooperation and understanding. You're true professionals!

It usually takes Peter and Kevin 3 to 4 days to print *Buzzwords*, and once they have finished, Cliff takes the completed copies to the IHC in Tauranga. The workers there staple the copies, put the sticky labels on, and give us a final postage count. They also do a great job, and usually provide same-day service, which really helps when we're running late.

Finally, Cliff takes the copies to the Tauranga NZ Post Service centre, where the issue is mailed. Because *Buzzwords* is a monthly publication, we always try hard to ensure that copies are in the hands of readers no later than the first or second of the month of publication. Still, we can never be certain just when the mail gets to your house. Because it is out of our control by then, we just hope that it makes it more or less on time.

And now for the costs. A press run of *Buzzwords* is approximately 1050, with about 975 actually mailed out. Since the total production cost per issue is about \$1035, the cost to you for your mailed copy is \$1.06 (or \$11.68 for 11 issues per year). NZ Post receives 45 cents of that \$1.06, and Advance Print gets 38 cents. MAF Qual, for whom Cliff works, is paid the equivalent of 21 cents per copy, while IHC receives just 2 cents.

So as you can see, the major cost of *Buzzwords* is actually the postage it takes to get it from Tauranga to your door.

VSA FOR PNG

Our industry has had a long association with Papua New Guinea, from the original development of beekeeping in the Highlands by Gavin McKenzie in the '70's, to the training of PNG beekeepers currently taking place at Telford Polytech. Many beekeepers will remember visits in the early '80's from Ian Mopafi, who is now Secretary of Agriculture in the Eastern Highlands provincial government. More recently, Tella Loie, beekeeping officer in the Eastern Highlands, attended our 1993 Annual Conference in Gore.

Now the NZ-PNG connection looks set to continue, thanks to a position currently being advertised with Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA). The VSA is looking for a New Zealander to take on a two-year term as business manager for Honey Producers Pty Ltd, the beekeepers' cooperative which sells PNG's honey production and provides hive components and nucs to new beekeepers throughout the country.

In *Buzzwords* 33 we reported on the spread of the two Asian parasitic mites (*Varroa jacobsoni* and *Tropilaelaps clareae*) into PNG from Irian Jaya. So PNG beekeeping is certainly at a crossroads. The appointment of a NZ business manager for Honey Producers, who can handle the business affairs of the cooperative as well as help the industry come to grips with the mites, will therefore be crucial for the continued development of beekeeping in PNG.



- 6) General comments regarding project development you wish to include
- 7) Your preference for contact. Either a) through you only, or b) direct with manufacturer client (keeping you informed of our progress).

I'm really looking forward to hearing about all the interesting manufacturing projects you're involved in out there. Remember - this is a golden opportunity for you to gain great publicity for both your business and the customers you work with. And it will also help build on the existing positive public perception of honey as an exciting, beneficial food.

Bill Floyd, Marketing Committee

US BEEKEEPERS TOUR

New Zealand beekeepers were recently host to a tour group of visiting American beekeepers. The tour, headed by Dr. James Tew of the USDA, was run under the auspices of the Citizens Ambassador programme of People to People International. People to People was founded by President Eisenhower for the purpose of increasing international cooperation through non-political, private citizen exchanges.

The Americans had a whirlwind itinerary, visiting both Australia and New Zealand in just over two weeks. As a result, they were only able to visit with beekeepers and government personnel in the northern half of the North Island. Stops included a meeting with Auckland beekeepers, a seminar at Ruakura, and visits to Rotorua and the Coromandel. The tour party was also treated to an early Christmas Party put on by the Waikato branch.

The twenty-two members of the group were certainly a diverse lot. As beekeepers, they ranged from single hive hobbyists to Horace Bell, one of the biggest beekeepers in the world. Mr. Bell owns 50,000 hives, which he runs for both pollination and honey production. Each year he and his wife Luella migrate their hives on semi-trucks from Florida (for citrus honey and buildup), to New Jersey and Maine (for cranberry and blueberry pollination), to North Dakota (for the main honey flow).

The outfit really is mobile. According to Horace, everything is done by the truckload. But instead of working in yards, they bring their hives into a shed, where the honey is removed, splits are made, and miticides and antibiotics are dispensed. Then it's off to the next destination, sometimes as far as 1600 km away.

Another interesting participant in the tour was Paul Jackson, Texas State Entomologist. Mr. Jackson is in charge of the Africanised bee programme in the state; even his calling card shows how to compare worker cell sizes for Africanised and European bees. Mr. Jackson had some unusual tales to tell about working the Africanised bee swarm trap lines along the US-Mexico border. It seems that where the swarms are being found is also a major drug-running area, and beekeeping personnel servicing the traps have to pack hand guns, just in case!

The Americans also had some chilling stories about varroa

mites, which are really starting to decimate honey bees throughout the US. As we reported in *Buzzwords* 56, many commercial outfits are being hard hit, with hives dying from the mite even during major honey flows. Some members of the tour party also believe that varroa is beginning to develop a resistance to flualinate, the compound used in varroa mite treatment strips.

The varroa mite has had one positive aspect, however. According to Dr. Tew, over half the colonies in Ohio died last winter from the mite and other causes. So when it came time in the spring for growers to look for pollination services for apples and other crops, contract prices for the bees that were left went as high as \$NZ100 per hive.

AFRICANISED BEE MARCH

The USDA recently reported two new finds of Africanised bees. The bees have now made it to the metropolitan area of Houston, Texas, their first encounter with a major population centre in the US. As well, swarms of the bees have been found near the Arizona-California state line, dashing California package bee producers hopes of being able to ship live bees to Canada in the foreseeable future. The Canadian federal government proposal to reopen the border with the US to such shipments specifically forbids package bees from states bordering any other state with Africanised bees.

The Africanised bee has now moved 480km northeast in the last three years since it was first discovered in the US in Brownsville, Texas. At the same time the bee has spread throughout Texas, Old Mexico, and Arizona. The western-most swarm was found on September 8 in a swarm trap four miles west of Yuma, Arizona near the Colorado River. The river at this point forms the border between Arizona and California.

CARNIOLAN RISK ANALYSIS

A risk analysis on importation of Carniolan honey bee semen from Germany has recently been produced by the MAF Regulatory Authority. The analysis comes in response to approaches by New Zealand beekeepers seeking to import Carniolan stock.

The analysis identifies potential honey bee disease risks and summarises both NZ and overseas scientific literature on the possibilities of transmitting such diseases in drone semen. It concludes that the transmission of most diseases (except viruses) is remote.

Nevertheless, in the section on risk management, the Regulatory Authority proposes a set of certification procedures, post-arrival quarantines and semen testing regimes designed to ensure that no new honey bee diseases are introduced into New Zealand by such an importation. The requirements include the treating of the semen with antibiotics to kill any *Melissococcus pluton* (EFB), *Bacillus larvae* (AFB) or other unwanted bacterial contaminants; the certification of Africanised honey bee country freedom for the country producing the semen; the testing of the semen for bacteria and viruses; the analysis of progeny for potential

HONEY INDUSTRY TRUST FUND

Applications for funding close on 15 August and 15 February. Forms available from PO Box 4048, Wgtn.

Africanisation; and the maintenance of NZ queens inseminated with the semen in a gazetted quarantine area, where the behavioural traits of the resulting F₁ hybrid will be assessed. According to the analysis, there will be virtually no chance of the genetic material being unknowingly introduced by free-flying drones from the quarantined hives since drones are always direct (haploid) clones of the mother queen (which will be of NZ stock).

The analysis has now been advertised for public comment in the November 1 issue of *Sentinel*, the official NZ government publication which deals with agricultural quarantine issues. Closing date for submissions is January, 15, 1994.

ASIAN CONFERENCE SET

Asia is becoming a major market for both our honey bee products and live bees. And part of the development of this market stems from contacts made at bee conferences (for instance, one in Thailand in 1992, and another in China just several months ago).

Now comes news of another opportunity to forge links with Asian beekeepers. The 2nd Asian Apicultural Association conference is set to be held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from the 26th to the 29th of July, 1994. The conference will include participants from most Asian beekeeping countries. There will also be the opportunity to set up trade displays for bee products and beekeeping equipment.

If you're interested in attending this conference, you can obtain more details by writing to: The Organising Committee, 2nd Asian Apicultural Association Conference, Directorate Afforestation and Social Forestry, Ministry of Forestry, Manggala Wanabakti Building 13 Floor, Jl. Gatot Subroto Senayan, Jakarta 10270, Indonesia. Or you can fax the committee at 62 21 573 7092.

CONFERENCE SURPRISES

If you haven't attended a beekeepers' meeting for a few years now because you think they're getting to be a bit "old hat", this year's annual conference in Tauranga should certainly come as a big surprise. The Bay of Plenty branch is already hard at work planning activities and speakers, and the week-long event will definitely turn some heads.

To begin with, the organising committee has already received confirmation of a great guest speaker from overseas. He's Dr. Mark Winston from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. Dr. Winston is a world expert on bee biology and pheromones and has written an excellent book (*The Biology of the Honey Bee*) which is now regarded as the essential text on the subject. He is also an authority on the Africanised bee, having studied it in South and Central America in the 1970's under professor Orley Taylor, the man who predicted

the bee's spread into the US. Dr. Winston's book, *Killer Bees*, is acknowledged by beekeepers and scientists alike as the most well written and accurate account of this insect which has so captured the world's imagination (and fear!).

The BOP branch is also organising an inaugural Beekeeper of the Year competition. The contest, which is similar to the famous Skellerup Young Farmer of the Year, will be held throughout conference week. Trevor Bryant, the convenor, hopes the event will attract sponsorship and prizes worth over \$20,000, so the contest will definitely be worth entering. Branches throughout the country will be asked to hold local competitions later in the year.

And in another coup, the branch has secured Sir Edmund Hillary as patron for the Beekeeper of the Year competition. As you probably all know, Sir Edmund's father was a commercial beekeeper, and he himself worked in the family operation before setting his sights on that famous mountain. Sir Edmund has been gracious enough to accept an invitation to attend the conference and lend his support to the competition.

There are other workshops and activities in the pipeline, which will be announced nearer to the time. But suffice it to say that this conference will definitely be a bit different from the ordinary. So make plans now to attend. The conference will be held July 18-22, 1994, at the Willow Park Hotel, Tauranga.

FROM THE BRANCHES

The ever-popular Southland Beekeepers Field Day will be held on Saturday, February 5 at Keith Herron's Greenvale Apiaries, Waikaka (outside of Gore). This is always one of the best of the summer beekeeping field days, so plan now to attend.



Bye!

BUZZWORDS IS ...

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Articles and feedback to *Buzzwords*, c/- MAF, Private Bag, Tauranga. Fax (07) 578 8429, phone (07) 578 2069. Deadline for copy is the 20th of each month.

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